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ABSTRACT

This reference guide is designed to assist faculty and staff at Mississippi State University to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities as required by federal law and endorsed by the mission of the university. Section 1 summarizes requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and recent legal decisions. Section 2 outlines responsibilities of students, faculty and staff. The next section outlines reasonable accommodations for students with the following disabilities: orthopedic/mobility impairment, blindness/visual impairments, learning disabilities, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, traumatic brain injury, deafness/hearing impairments, speech and language disorders, psychological disorders, and other disabilities. Also provided are suggested teaching strategies (such as speaking distinctly and at a relaxed rate and working with the student to make arrangements for accommodations). Tips on disability awareness address appropriate language and appropriate interaction. Relevant university resources and available adaptive equipment are listed. An agreement form for tape recording lectures and an accessibility checklist complete the manual. (DB)

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A DESK REFERENCE GUIDE FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

College Students with Disabilities

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Selected Resources Consulted in the Preparation of this Guide

A Faculty Handbook-Corning Community College
Accommodating Disabled Students: A Resource Guide for Faculty and Staff, Mississippi State University
Access to Education: A Guide to Accommodating Students with Disabilities, University of New Mexico
Alert Newsletter, Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)
Brinckerhoff, L. C., Shaw, S. F., & McGuire, J. M. (1992). Promoting access, accommodations, and independence for college students with learning disabilities. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 25(7), 417-429.
Career Connections Project, University of Minnesota
College Students With Disabilities: A Resource Guide for Faculty and Staff, Calhoun Community College
Disability Accommodation Handbook, Metropolitan Community Colleges
Disability Handbook: Department of Rehabilitation Education & Research, University of Arkansas
HEATH Resource Center, American Council on Education
National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHY)
Reasonable Accommodations For Individuals With Disabilities, Hudson Valley Community College
Section 504: The Law & Its Impact on Postsecondary Education, American Council on Education
Students With Disabilities: A Faculty Guide, Duluth Community College
The Impact of Section 504 on Postsecondary Education: Subpart E, AHEAD
University of New Orleans Disabled Student Services Faculty Manual

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This Guide is designed to serve as a quick reference for information, accommodations, and legal requirements in providing equal access for students with disabilities.

College Students With Disabilities:
A Desk Reference Guide For Faculty and Staff
Spring 1996

This resource guide is designed to assist the faculty and staff at Mississippi State University to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. The mandate to provide reasonable accommodations comes from federal law and from the mission of the university to provide an educational opportunity to all its students. MSU is recognized for its commitment to provide campus and academic accessibility for all qualified students.

Faculty and staff need to know...

- **What the laws require.**
- **What recent legal decisions further defined the requirements of the law.**
- **Who is responsible for what.**
- **What are reasonable accommodations for different types of disabilities.**
- **Tips that facilitate student learning.**
- **Tips for disability awareness.**
- **What are the university resources.**

The university is not required to lower its standards.
Section 504 does require the university to provide reasonable accommodations that afford an equal opportunity for students with disabilities. Achieving reasonable accommodations for a student with a disability involves shared responsibility between students, faculty, and staff.

The Law

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states that ...

> "No otherwise qualified person with a disability in the United States ... shall, solely by reason of ... disability, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

A person with a disability includes ...

> "any person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, (2) has a record of such an impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment."

A "qualified person with a disability" is defined as one ...

> "who meets the academic and technical standards requisite to admission or participation in the education program or activity."

Section 504 protects the rights of qualified individuals who have disabilities such as, but not limited to:

- Blindness/visual impairment
- Cerebral palsy
- Deafness/hearing impairment
- Epilepsy or seizure disorder
- Orthopedic/mobility impairment
- Specific learning disability
- Speech and language disorder
- Spinal cord injury
- Tourette's syndrome
- Traumatic brain injury

Chronic illnesses, such as:

- AIDS
- Arthritis
- Cancer
- Cardiac disease
- Diabetes
- Multiple sclerosis
- Muscular dystrophy
- Psychiatric disability

Under the provisions of Section 504 ...
Mississippi State University may not discriminate in the recruitment, admission, educational process, or treatment of students. Students who have self-identified, provided documentation of disability, and requested reasonable accommodations are entitled to receive approved modifications of programs, appropriate academic adjustments, or auxiliary aids that enable them to participate in and benefit from all educational programs and activities.

Section 504 specifies that universities may not ...

limit the number of students with disabilities admitted, make preadmission inquires as to whether or not an applicant has a disability, use admission tests or criteria that inadequately measure the academic qualifications of students with disabilities because special provisions were not made, exclude a qualified student with a disability from any course of study, or establish rules and policies that may adversely affect students with disabilities.

Modifications and accommodations for students with disabilities include:

- removal of architectural barriers
- provide services such as readers for students with blindness, visual impairments or learning disabilities, qualified interpreters and note takers for students with deafness or hearing impairments, and note takers for students with learning disabilities or orthopedic impairments
- provide modifications, substitutions, or waivers of courses in major fields of study or degree requirements on a case-by-case basis (such accommodation need not be made if the institution can demonstrate that the changes requested would substantially alter essential elements of the course or program)
- allow extra time to complete exams
- permit exams to be individually proctored, read orally, dictated, or typed
- use alternative forms for students to demonstrate course mastery
- permit the use of computer software programs or other assistive technological devices to assist in test-taking and study skills.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act contains more specific information about compliance issues in postsecondary education than the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA did extend the law to cover private institutions of higher education as well as those receiving federal funding. Universities and colleges can also expect to see more rigid enforcement of the law with the passage of the ADA.

For more information ...

AHEAD (Association on Higher Education and Disability) is an international organization providing technical assistance and information to faculty and staff. Publications include:

- Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
  by Warren L. King, James Baker and Jane E. Jarrow
- The Impact of Section 504 on Postsecondary Education: Subpart E
  by Jane E. Jarrow
- Issues in Higher Education and Disability Law
  by Jeanne Kincaid, Esq. and Jo Anne Simon, Esq.
- Title by Title: The ADA's Impact on Postsecondary Education
  by Jane E. Jarrow

These four books are available on reserve in the Mitchell Memorial Library.

Recent Legal Decisions

The university must provide the accommodation
Students are not required to assume the responsibility for securing a necessary accommodation. The university is required to provide reasonable accommodations for a student's known disability so that the student has an equal opportunity to participate in the courses, activities, or programs. The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) ruled that a university may not charge students for necessary accommodations.

Expense of accommodation is not undue hardship
Providing an auxiliary aid or incurring an expense to ensure access would not constitute undue hardship to the university. In determining what constitutes an undue hardship, the OCR views the entire financial resources of the university rather than any single department or college.

Classroom must be accessible
A classroom's location must be changed to provide accessibility for a student with a mobility impairment. The university does not need to make every classroom accessible but must provide for the participation of students with disabilities when "viewed in its entirety."

Extended time
Extended time is a reasonable accommodation for a student whose documentation specifically calls for that accommodation. The university is required to ensure that the student is provided additional time to complete tests and/or course work in order to provide an equal opportunity for that student.

Altered form of exam
The form of an exam must be altered if the testing procedure puts a student with a disability at a disadvantage based on the student's documented disability. There may be an exception when the purpose of the test is to measure a particular skill.

Accommodation must be documented
The university may refuse to grant a student's request for an accommodation which is not specifically recommended in the student's documentation.

Handouts in alternate format
If a student with a visual impairment is enrolled in a class, the instructor must provide all handouts in the alternate format requested by the student. In addition, all handouts must be made available to students on the same day they are distributed to nondisabled students.

Material on reserve in library
The instructor must make course material on reserve in the library available in alternate formats for students with visual impairments enrolled in the course.

Diagnostic information confidential
Faculty/staff do not have the right to access diagnostic information regarding a student's disability. Faculty/staff need only know the accommodations that are necessary to guarantee an equal opportunity for the student.

Personal liability
An individual faculty member who fails to provide an accommodation to a student with a documented disability may be held personally liable.

Academic freedom
Academic freedom does not permit instructors to decide if they will provide special aids and services for students with documented disabilities in the classroom.

Testing accommodations
Accommodations for testing such as readers, scribes, or the use of adaptive equipment must be provided for a student with a documented disability.

Personal services and aids
The university is not required to provide personal services such as attendant care, or personal aids such as wheelchairs or eyeglasses.

Accessible programs
The university must operate its programs in the most integrated setting appropriate.

Preadmission
Preadmission inquiries as to whether a person has a disability are not permissible.

Accommodations for ACT testing
Scholarships based on ACT scores must allow for accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Admissions criteria
The university may not use as sole criteria for admission or rejection a test that has been shown to be discriminatory for persons with disabilities.

Job announcement postings
Postings for job announcements must be readily accessible to students with visual impairments.

Bulletin identify 504 coordinator
The name of the Section 504 coordinator must be identified in recruiting materials such as application forms and school bulletins.

Housing options
A student with a disability is entitled to have more than one housing option presented if options exist for nondisabled students.

Student may file grievance
A student with a disability may not only file a claim with the U. S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, but may also file a complaint with HUD.

Housing room assignments
A student with a disability who needs attendant care is not automatically assigned to a single room.

Off-campus housing
If the institution provides assistance to nondisabled students for off-campus housing, then the institution must provide options to students with disabilities for accessible off-campus housing.

Weight training
University must provide comparable opportunities for weight training to students with disabilities.

Career counseling
Career counselors are prohibited from counseling a student with a disability into more restrictive career paths than are recommended to nondisabled students with similar abilities and interests.

Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Students

Students with disabilities have the responsibility to:

1. Self-identify concerning disability status to the office of Student Support Services in a timely manner.
2. Provide disability documentation that is as recent as within the last three years.
3. Request necessary accommodations.

Responsibilities of Faculty/Staff Members

If Notified in Writing

Faculty/staff members have the responsibility to cooperate with Student Support Services in providing authorized accommodations in a reasonable and timely manner. Faculty/staff should meet with students who provide a letter of request for accommodations to establish the means of providing accommodation.

If Not Notified in Writing

If a student requests accommodation and the faculty/staff member has not been notified of the student's need for accommodation, then the faculty/staff member should refer the student to Student Support Services. If the disability is visible and the accommodation appears appropriate, the faculty/staff member should provide the accommodation while awaiting official notification.

If Question Appropriateness of Accommodation

If a faculty/staff member has questions about the appropriateness of certain accommodations, Student Support Services should be contacted for further clarification. The faculty/staff member should continue to provide accommodations while the issue is being resolved. When a student uses a tape recorder in the classroom, it is appropriate to ask the student to sign an agreement not to release the recording or otherwise obstruct the copyright. (See page 26 for agreement form.)

Definitions

Diagnostic information

The physician's/psychologist's report concerning the disability or condition.

Reasonable accommodations

The physician's/psychologist's specific recommendations of strategies, technology, or aids needed to provide the student with equal access to an education.

Faculty and staff do not have the right to access the student's diagnostic information or fail to provide the authorized accommodation.
Faculty and staff have the right to request the specific reasonable accommodations.

Shared Responsibilities

Students with disabilities have the first responsibility to report their needs to the faculty in a timely manner as faculty are not required to anticipate special student needs. Faculty/staff members should keep students in mind when making special class arrangements such as field trips. Faculty/staff should state on the syllabus that students inform them of their special needs as soon as possible to ensure that those needs are met in a timely manner. If a student waits until the day of an exam to ask for extended time or a separate testing area, the student has failed to make the request in a timely manner. If the student fails to ask for extended time until late in the semester, the instructor is only required to provide accommodations from that time and does not need to offer make up exams.

When a student discloses a disability, faculty/staff members should ask what they can do to facilitate learning. Often it is as simple as allowing the student to sit in the front of the class.

Faculty/staff members may not discourage students from specific fields of study if the student meets the admission requirements and maintains the appropriate grades and is otherwise qualified. Faculty/staff members are responsible to provide an education and the student is responsible to maintain the academic requirements.

Procedures for Testing Accommodations

Getting the test to Student Support Services (SSS)

- The faculty member or a representative from the department delivers the test to SSS at least 24 hours in advance.
- The test should arrive in a sealed envelope with the student's name, course name and number, faculty name and telephone number, and time exam will be given written on the outside.

Once the test arrives at SSS

- Test is logged in a log book which contains the student's name, course name and number, date and time test delivered, and name and signature of person delivering test.
- Test is place in a locked file.

Taking the test

- Student takes the test at the same class time except in the event of a night class or back-to-back classes.
- Student leaves all backpacks, notes, and books in a separate area unless with written permission from professor.
- Proctors are instructed to read what is there, make no interpretations or answer any questions. The role of the scribe is to write only what is dictated to them. Proctors are students who have not had the course, are not currently enrolled in the course, or plan to take the course in the future.

Returning the test to your office

- Test is hand carried by someone from SSS to the faculty member's office. The logbook denotes the date, time, who the test was delivered to, and who delivered the test.

Orthopedic/Mobility Impairments

A variety of orthopedic/mobility-related disabilities result from congenital conditions, accidents, or progressive neuromuscular diseases. These disabilities include conditions such as spinal cord injury (paraplegia or quadriplegia), cerebral palsy, spina bifida, amputation, muscular dystrophy, cardiac conditions, cystic fibrosis, paralysis, polio/post polio, and stroke. Functional limitations and abilities vary widely even within one group of disabilities. Accommodations vary greatly and can best be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Accommodations may include:

- accessible location for the classroom and place for faculty to meet with student
- extra time to get from one class to another, especially in inclement weather
- special seating in classrooms
- notetakers, use of tape recorders, laptop computers, or photocopying of peer notes
- test accommodations: extended time, separate place, scribes, access to word processors
- special computer equipment/software: voice activated word processing, word prediction, keyboard modification
- extra time for assignments due to slow writing speed
- adjustable lab tables or drafting tables for classes taught in lab settings
- lab assistance
- accessible parking in close proximity to the building
- customized physical education class activities that allow the student to participate within their capabilities
- course waiver or substitution for certain students
- taped texts
- advance planning for field trips to ensure accessibility.

  If the university provides student transportation, it must provide accessible transportation on a field trip.

If you want to know more about orthopedic/mobility impairments ...

Students with orthopedic/mobility impairments may have any of the following conditions:

- pain, spasticity, or lack of coordination
- flare-ups of intensity of the symptoms
- periods of remission in which little or no symptoms are visible
- inability to walk without crutches, canes, braces, or walkers
- ability to stand or walk but may use wheelchair to conserve energy or gain speed
- inability to stand or walk and use wheelchair for total mobility
- limited lower body use but full use of arms and hands
- limited use of lower body and limited use of arms and hands
- impairment of speech or hearing
- limited head or neck movement
- decreased physical stamina and endurance
- decreased eye-hand coordination.

Disabilities that generally restrict mobility functioning:

Cerebral Palsy

The term applies to a number of non-progressive motor disorders of the central nervous system. The effects can be severe, causing inability to control bodily movement, or mild, only slightly affecting speech or hearing. The term is a general classification for stable cerebral lesions that usually occur at or before birth.

Spinal Cord Injury

In damage to the spinal cord, the extent of the resultant paralysis and sensory loss is determined by the level of injury. Injuries below the first thoracic nerve root (T1) level result in paraplegia, a spastic paralysis of the lower extremities. Injuries above the T1 level result in quadriplegia, a spastic or flaccid paralysis of the lower and upper extremities. The injury may be complete or incomplete.

Degenerative Diseases

Progressive diseases include muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis that may limit gross motor functions and/or fine motor activity.

Post-Polio Syndrome

A variety of problems are presumed to be the late effects of polio and the symptoms may include fatigue, weakness, shortness of breath, and pain.

Motor Neuron Diseases

A group of disorders such as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), Progressive Bulbar Palsy (PBP), Progressive Spinal Muscular Atrophy, and Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease produce symptoms such as pain, numbness, weakness, loss of upper and lower motor functions, and problems in breathing.

Blindness/Visual Impairments

Visual impairments include disorders in the sense of vision that affect the central vision acuity, the field of vision, color perception, or binocular visual function. The American Medical Association defined legal blindness as visual acuity not exceeding 20/200 in the better eye with correction, or a limit in the field of vision that is less than a 20 degree angle (tunnel vision). Legal blindness may be caused by tumors, infections, injuries, retrolental fibroplasis, cataracts, glaucoma, diabetes, vascular impairments, or myopia. Visual disabilities vary widely. Some students may use a guide dog, others a white cane, while others may not require any mobility assistance.

Accommodations may include:

- reading lists or syllabi in advance to permit time for transferring into alternate format
- text books ordered in the preferred medium of the student
- seating in the front of the class without glare from windows
- tape recording of lectures and class discussions
- notetaking devices such as pocket braille computers
- handouts in the medium that the student prefers
- clear black print on white or pale yellow paper for students with visual impairments
- testing accommodations: taped tests, reading of tests, scribe, extended time, separate place, enlarged print, computer word processing software with speech access
- materials presented on the board or on transparencies read out loud
- lab assistance
- advance notice of class schedule changes.

Types of alternate format of printed material for students with blindness/visual impairments include:

- audio tape
  Most textbooks can be ordered on tape from Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (1-800-221-4792).
- large print
  Standard sized materials can be enlarged on a copier using 11"X17" paper.
- computer disk
  Convert the text of materials to ASCII format.
- Braille
  Adaptive equipment will be necessary to provide alternate format in braille; however, braille is probably the least requested alternate format for students with blindness.

If you want to know more about blindness ...

Students with no light perception or no functional vision may rely on a white cane, a guide dog, or a sighted guide for mobility purposes. Guide dogs should not be petted. When serving as a sighted guide, let the student take your arm just above the elbow.

A lower noise level in the classroom is important for hearing. Students may require a reader for assignments and exams and may use a note taking device in class to take notes.

Passageways through the door and aisles should be kept clear. When furniture is moved students should be advised of the new arrangement. Any changes in class locations should be given to students in advance or a nondisabled student assigned to wait at the door and guide the student with blindness to the new location.

It is helpful to identify yourself first when speaking with a student with blindness.

If you want to know more about visual impairments ...

Approximately 80% of all legally blind individuals have some usable vision. Students with visual impairments benefit from seating at the front of the class. Lighting is very important and should be discussed with the professor. Glare may be especially troublesome. Poor quality print or copies and written materials on colored paper may reduce legibility for the student.

Students with visual impairments may use individually prescribed low vision aids such as magnifying glasses or monoculars, large print books, enlarged screen reading programs for computers, and/or felt tip markers for note taking in class.

The instructor should use a black felt tip marker when making remarks on written assignments or grading on exams to assist students with visual impairments to read the information.

Learning Disabilities

A learning disability is a permanent neurological disorder that affects the manner in which information is received, organized, remembered, and then retrieved or expressed. Students with learning disabilities possess average to above average intelligence. The disability is demonstrated by a significant discrepancy between expected and actual performance in one or more of the basic functions: memory, oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills, reading comprehension, mathematical calculation, or mathematical reasoning.

Accommodations may include:
(No student will need all of these and specific accommodations are based on the diagnostic information that is on file in Student Support Services.)

Registration
- reduced course load
- priority registration

General
- extended time to complete assignments
- course substitution for nonessential course requirements in major

Note taking
- tape recorders
- copies of classmate's notes

Testing
- extended time
- proctored testing in a quiet, separate area
- test read to student
- student respond orally to essay test
- alternative type of exam
- scribe
- blank card or paper to assist in reading
- calculator

Reading
- taped texts
- reader

Writing
- extended time for in-class assignments to correct spelling, punctuation, grammar
- word processor with spell check

Math
- calculator for a student with a disability in the area of math processing. (The SAT is now allowing the use of a standard four function calculator as an accommodation.)

If you want to know more about learning disabilities ...

Learning disabilities vary from one person to another and are often inconsistent within an individual. Some of the terms associated with learning disabilities include:

- dyslexia - inability to read
- dyscalculia - inability to do mathematics
- dysgraphia - inability to write words with appropriate syntax
- dysphasia - inability to speak with fluency or sometimes to understand others
- figure-ground perception - inability to see an object from a background of other objects
- visual discrimination - inability to see the difference in objects
- auditory figure-ground perception - inability to hear one sound among others
- auditory sequencing - inability to hear sounds in the right order.

Students may demonstrate one or more problem characteristics and the form may be mild, moderate, or severe:

Study Skills
- inability to organize and budget time
- difficulty taking notes/outlining material
- difficulty following directions
- difficulty completing assignments on time

Writing Skills
- frequent spelling errors
- incorrect grammar
- poor penmanship
- poor sentence structure
- difficulty taking notes while listening to class lectures
- problems with organization, development of ideas and transition words

Oral Language
- difficulty understanding oral language when lecturer speaks fast
- difficulty attending to long lectures
- poor vocabulary and word recall
- problems with correct grammar
- difficulty in remembering a series of events in sequence
- difficulty with pronouncing multi syllabic words

Reading Skills
- slow reading rate
- inaccurate comprehension
- poor retention
- poor tracking skills (skip words, loose place, miss lines)
- difficulty with complex syntax on tests
- incomplete mastery of phonics

Math Skills
- computational skill difficulties
- difficulty with reasoning
- difficulty with basic math operations (multiplication tables)
- number reversals, confusion of symbols
- difficulty copying problems
- difficulty with concepts of time and money

Social Skills
- spatial disorientation
- low frustration level
- low self-esteem
- impulsive
- disorientation in time
- difficulty with delaying problem resolution

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD)

ADD is officially called Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and is a neurologically-based medical problem. It is a developmental disability characterized by inattention, impulsivity, and sometimes hyperactivity. The results can lead to lifelong problems.

Students with ADD may demonstrate one or more problem characteristics and the form may be mild, moderate, or severe:

- concentrating
- listening
- starting, organizing, and completing tasks
- following directions
- making transitions
- interacting with others
- producing work at a consistently normal level
- organizing problems that involve multiple steps.

Accommodations may include the accommodations for students with learning disabilities. See page 11.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Head injury is one of the fastest growing types of disabilities especially in the age range of 15 to 28 years. Over 500,000 cases are reported hospitalized each year. There is a wide range of differences in the effects of a TBI on the individual, but most cases result in some type of impairment. The functions that may be affected include: memory, cognitive/perceptual communication, speed of thinking, communication, spatial reasoning, conceptualization, psychosocial behaviors, motor abilities, sensory perception, and physical abilities.

Students with TBI may demonstrate one or more problem characteristics and the form may be mild, moderate, or severe:

- organizing thoughts, cause-effect relationships, and problem solving
- processing information and word retrieving
- generalizing and integrating skills
- interacting with others
- compensating for memory loss.

Accommodations may include the accommodations for students with learning disabilities. See page 11.

If you want to know more about ADD ...

A student with an ADD may:

- perform better in morning classes
- need to sit at the front of the class
- need assignment organizers
- need assignments in writing
- experience difficulty following through with several directions at once
- have problems organizing multi-step tasks
- benefit from structure using lists, schedules.

If you want to know more about TBI ...

There are important differences which affect the educational program of a student with an acquired head injury as compared to students with learning disabilities.

A student with a TBI may:

- need established routine with step-by-step directions
- need books and lectures on tape
- need repetition or some type of reinforcement of information to be learned
- demonstrate poor judgment and memory problems
- need a tutor
- exhibit discrepancies in abilities such as reading comprehension at a much lower level than spelling ability.

Deafness/Hearing Impairments

More individuals in the United States have a hearing impairment than any other type of physical disability. A hearing impairment is any type or degree of auditory impairment while deafness is an inability to use hearing as a means of communication. Hearing loss may be sensorineural, involving an impairment of the auditory nerve; conductive, a defect in the auditory system which interferes with sound reaching the cochlea; or a mixed impairment, involving both sensorineural and conductive. Hearing loss is measured in decibels and may be mild, moderate, or profound. A person who is born with a hearing loss may have language deficiencies and exhibit poor vocabulary and syntax. Many students with hearing loss may use hearing aids and rely on lip reading. Others may require an interpreter.

Accommodations may include:

- seating in the front of the classroom
- written supplement to oral instructions, assignments, and directions.
- visual aids as often as possible
- speaker facing the class during lectures
- speaker repeating the questions that other students in the class ask
- note taker for class lectures
- test accommodations: extended time, separate place, proofreading of essay tests, access to word processor, interpreted directions
- unfamiliar vocabulary written on the board or a handout
- small amplification system called an FM loop system
- interpreter seated where the student can see the interpreter and the lecturer
- excess noise reduced as much as possible to facilitate communication.

Speech and Language Disorders

Speech and language disorders may result from hearing loss, cerebral palsy, learning disability, or physical conditions. The disorder may result in stuttering, problems with articulation, voice disorders, or aphasia.

Accommodations may include:

- modifications of assignments such as one-to-one presentation or use of computer with voice synthesizer
- substitutions for oral class report.

If you want to know more about deafness/hearing impairments ...

Hearing aids and lip reading

Some students may use hearing aids and lip reading to assist in discriminating sounds; but only 30% of spoken words in the English language can be lip-read. It is important when speaking to a student with a hearing impairment to look at the student, keep hands away from the mouth, use shorter sentences, speak slowly, and use appropriate facial expressions and gestures. Technical and unfamiliar vocabulary should be written down for the student. Standing in front of a window or a source of glare may limit visibility for the student. It is not helpful to shout or exaggerate lip movements.

Interpreters

If the student uses an interpreter remember to look at the student, not the interpreter. The interpreter should be seated so that the student can see the lecturer and the interpreter. If overheads or videos are used, some light should be left on so that the student can see the interpreter. A note taker or copies of another student's notes may be necessary as the student can not watch the interpreter and take notes at the same time. Interpreters are professionals with specialized training and they will not give opinions about the student's progress in the course. Consideration of a brief break during a long lecture will give the interpreter and student a much needed rest.

Other considerations

Classroom discussions are difficult and should be followed by summaries of the relevant information. Questions raised by other students should be repeated by the instructor. Videos without captions require a written summary or outline of the important points. Verbal assignments, due dates, changes in schedule and other information may be missed by the student and should be provided in writing. Oral tests may be impossible for the student and can be solved by a written exam. The student may not hear what is said while the instructor writes on the board. The use of overheads and all types of visual aids provide better communication.

If you want to know more about speech and language disorders ...

Speech and language disorders may be managed by computerized voice synthesizers or electronic speaking machines. Speech therapy is frequently used to improve certain disorders. Anxiety and stress often accompany oral communication and exacerbate the problem.

Special considerations

The student may speak slower in class and should be given time to express his/her thoughts. Interrupting or completing a sentence for the student is not helpful and may lead to embarrassment. It is appropriate to ask the student to repeat the statement. Summarizing the message helps the student to check for accuracy of understanding. The instructor's acceptance and support of the student is important to facilitate communication and manage the speech disorder. If an oral presentation is required the instructor should discuss alternatives with the student.

Psychological Disorders

Psychological disorders cover a wide range of disorders such as neuroses, psychoses, and personality disorders. The majority of psychological disorders are controlled using a combination of medications and psychotherapy. If the student self-discloses to the instructor, it may be appropriate to discuss problems and side effects associated with medications. Only a limited number of court cases have been conducted to set precedents for reasonable accommodations for students with any of these disorders. Based on court rulings on other types of disabilities it is probable that some of the following accommodations may be considered appropriate and reasonable.

Accommodations may include:

- extended time for exams, quiet testing area with a proctor
- notetakers, readers, or tape recorders in class
- seating arrangements that enhance the learning experience of the student
- incompletes or late withdrawals in place of course failures in the event of prolonged illness
- assistance with time management and study skills
- encouragement to use relaxation and stress reducing techniques during exams
- flexibility in the attendance requirements in case of health-related absences.

A student is required to makeup missed assignments and tests.

If you want to know more about psychological disorders ...

Invisible Disabilities

Psychological disorders fall into the group of invisible disabilities that may have little or no impact on learning. With proper diagnoses and treatment, students with psychological disorders are productive and successful in the academic environment.

Depression

Depression is a common occurrence that may affect social functioning, concentration and motivation, and the ability to tolerate stress. Episodes of lower level academic functioning related to the disability may be time limited. In some cases the student may need to withdraw from school or take an incomplete in course work to allow time for the condition to stabilize. Flexibility with assignments and exams may need to be negotiated between the student and the instructor.

Medications

Medications or changes in the medications that a student is taking may cause sleep disturbances, interference with concentration, diminished ability to attend to lectures or successfully complete assignments or exams. Accommodations may be needed for the presenting disability and the side effects of medication.

Behavior

Some students may exhibit negative behavior such as indifference or occasionally disruptive behavior. In the event of disruptive behavior, the student should be informed about the specific limits of acceptable behavior in the classroom and on campus. The Student Code of Conduct must be followed.

Other Disabilities

A large number of students registered at MSU have disabilities that do not necessarily fall into the major categories already discussed but are covered by Section 504/ADA. The degree to which these disabilities affect students in the academic setting vary widely. At times it is not the condition itself but the medication that is required to control symptoms that impairs academic performance. Common side effects of medications include fatigue, memory loss, shortened attention span, loss of concentration, and drowsiness. In some cases the degree of impairment may vary from time to time because of the nature of the disability or the medication. Some conditions are progressive and others may be stable.

A partial list of other disabilities include:

- AIDS
- Arthritis
- Asthma
- Burns
- Cancer
- Cardiovascular disorders
- Cerebral palsy
- Chronic pain
- Diabetes mellitus
- Epilepsy
- Hemophilia
- Lupus
- Motor neuron diseases
- Multiple sclerosis
- Muscular dystrophy
- Renal-kidney disease
- Respiratory disorders
- Sickle cell anemia
- Stroke
- Tourette's syndrome

Accommodations may include:

- extended time for exams
- enlarged printed materials
- tape recorded course materials
- readers
- computers or other adaptive equipment
- scribes
- flexibility in attendance requirements in case of health-related absences
- other accommodations found elsewhere in this guide.

A student is required to makeup missed assignments and tests.

If you want to know more about other disabilities ...

Invisible Disabilities

Students may have invisible disabilities and desire confidentiality about their condition. When discussing an accommodation, it is important to respect the rules of confidentiality. If a student requests accommodations, the student must have medical documentation on file in Student Support Services.

Temporary Disabilities

Some disabilities are temporary but may require accommodations for a limited time. Students who are recovering from surgery, injury, or severe illness may be unaware of accommodations that may be reasonable for a limited time period. Encouragement to contact the Student Support Services (SSS) and to talk with faculty and staff may prevent students from dropping out of school. The student, faculty/staff member, and SSS staff may work together to establish reasonable accommodations.

Seizure Disorders

Students who are subject to seizure disorders may have impaired consciousness, involuntary movements, and brief lapses of attention. Usually the seizures will be brief and infrequent. When a seizure occurs there is a brief change in the normal functioning of the brain's electrical system.

Permission to Leave Class

Some disabilities result in the need to consume large quantities of fluids and urinate often. The student may need to leave the classroom more frequently than nondisabled students.

Pain

Chronic pain may result in limitations to strength, standing, walking, climbing, sitting, kneeling, stooping, and carrying. Cold or sudden changes in temperature may increase the onset of pain. Students with chronic pain may need to stand or change positions intermittently during class. Severe pain may increase the number of absences but the student would still be required to complete the course assignments.

Respiratory Disorders

Some respiratory disorders can result in significant limitations to activities such as walking and climbing. Tolerance to temperature changes or extremes in temperature may be limited. Wet or humid conditions, along with fumes and dust may result in excerbation of the problem. Environments where smoking is permitted should be avoided.

Tips that Facilitate Student Learning

Many teaching strategies that assist students with disabilities are known to also benefit nondisabled students. Instruction that is provided in an array of approaches will reach more students than instruction using one method. The following are teaching strategies that will benefit students in the academic setting.

Required text

- select a text with a study guide

On the syllabi

- include a statement that students need to inform faculty members of their special needs as soon as possible to ensure that those needs are met in a timely manner

Before the lecture

- write key terms or an outline on the board, or prepare a lecture handout
- create study guides
- assign advance readings before the topic is due in the class session
- give students questions that they should be able to answer by the end of each lecture

Students with disabilities surveyed at MSU named the two most helpful things instructors can do to facilitate their learning:

- **speak slower when lecturing**
- **speak louder in large classrooms.**

During the lecture

- briefly review the previous lecture
- use visual aids such as overheads, diagrams, charts, graphs
- allow the use of tape recorders
- emphasize important points, main ideas, key concepts
- face the class when speaking
- explain technical language, terminology
- speak distinctly and at a relaxed rate, pausing to allow students time for notetaking
- leave time for questions periodically
- administer frequent quizzes to provide feedback for students
- give assignments in writing as well as orally.

Grading and evaluation

- consider a variant grading system with multiple grades for various tasks weighted differently
- work with the student to make arrangements early with Student Support Services for extended time or proctors for exams

Tips for Disability Awareness

Appropriate Language

- People with disabilities are people first. The Americans With Disabilities Act officially changed the way people with disabilities are referred to and provided the model. The person first and then the disability. This emphasizes the person and not the disability.

- Do use the word disability when referring to someone who has a physical, mental, emotional, sensory, or learning impairment.

- Do not use the word handicapped. A handicap is what a person with a disability cannot do.

- Avoid labeling individuals as victims, or the disabled, or names of conditions. Instead, refer to people with disabilities or someone who has epilepsy.

- Avoid terms such as wheelchair bound. Wheelchairs provide access and enable individuals to get around. Instead, refer to a person who uses a wheelchair or someone with a mobility impairment.

- When it is appropriate to refer to an individual's disability choose the correct terminology for the specific disability. Use terms such as quadriplegia, speech impairment, hearing impairment, or specific learning disability.

Appropriate Interaction

- When introduced offer to shake hands. People with limited hand use or artificial limbs can usually shake hands. It is an acceptable greeting to use the left hand for shaking.

- Treat adults as adults. Avoid patronizing people who use wheelchairs by patting them on the shoulder or touching their head. Never place your hands on a person's wheelchair as the chair is a part of the body space of the user.

- If possible, sit down when talking to a person who uses a wheelchair so that you are at the person's eye level.

- Speak directly to the person with a disability. Do not communicate through another person. If the person uses an interpreter, look at the person and speak to the person, not the interpreter.

- Offer assistance with sensitivity and respect. Ask if there is something you might do to help. If the offer is declined, do not insist.

- If you are a sighted guide for a person with a visual impairment, allow the person to take your arm at or above the elbow so that you guide rather than propel.

- When talking with a person with a speech impairment, listen attentively, ask short questions that require short answers, avoid correcting, and repeat what you understand if you are uncertain.

- When first meeting a person with blindness, identify yourself and any others who may be with you.

- When speaking to a person with a hearing impairment, look directly at the person and speak slowly. Avoid placing your hand over your mouth when speaking. Written notes may be helpful for short conversations.

University Resources

Section 504 Coordinator/ADA Coordinator

The Affirmative Action officer, David Torres, is the official Section 503/504/ADA Coordinator for MSU. He is located in Human Resources and can be reached by calling 325-2493. The Affirmative Action officer is responsible for ensuring that the university complies with federal regulations that guarantee qualified college students with disabilities equal access to all programs and services. Any student, faculty or staff member may contact his office for clarification of federal regulations, appeal of a grievance, or resolution of a disability-related problem.

Student Support Services

The Student Support Services (SSS) department is the official contact for students with disabilities who request special services or accommodations to provide an equal opportunity for academic success. Students must self-identify to the SSS office and provide documentation of their disability from an appropriate source. The staff of SSS serve as advocates for students with disabilities and assist them in achieving equal access to all university programs and services. The staff are available to consult with faculty, administrators, and staff concerning appropriate services for students with disabilities.

Specific services provided by SSS include:

- referral to appropriate specialist to obtain documentation
- maintenance of confidential records of students' documentation
- assistance with registration including priority registration
- assistance with interpretation and implementation of accommodations
- provision of notetakers, readers, adapted testing arrangements
- assistance with ordering recorded tests
- access to special equipment.

Comprehensive Assistive Technology Center (CATC)

The Comprehensive Assistive Technology Center is a statewide facility, providing services primarily to the clients of the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS). The CATC follows a functional model of services, dealing with the limitations imposed by disabilities, and not necessarily the diagnosis that causes the limitations. The staffing of the CATC includes rehabilitation engineers, a sensory specialist, an occupational therapist, a speech and language pathologist, and a cognitive rehabilitation specialist. The CATC provides direct, clinical services, including evaluation, training, design, and fabrication to persons with physical, sensory, communication, and/or cognitive disabilities. The CATC can provide services to students at MSU who are referred through MDRS, a Vocational Rehabilitation agency from another state, or through Project PAACS (Postsecondary Accommodations for Academic and Career Success).

Project PAACS

Postsecondary Accommodations for Academic and Career Success

In 1995 the U. S. Department of Education funded MSU's three-year model demonstration project which is housed in the Department of Counselor Education and Educational Psychology. The purpose of Project PAACS is to assist in training faculty, administrators, and student affairs staff in the requirements of disability laws and recent legal decisions. The project staff also assists students with disabilities to identify career interests/aptitudes, make informed career decisions, access necessary assistive technology, and develop effective job search skills and strategies.

Adaptive Equipment Available On Campus

Cassette Recorder

Student Support Services

- has 2 and/or 4-track variable-speed playback, indexing capability, and headphones
- can be used with the Library of Congress cassettes and the Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic cassettes

Computers/Adaptive Devices

Butler Computer Lab

- keyboard software to minimize key strokes
- word prediction
- partitioned work areas

Student Support Services

- grammar check and interactive spell check software
- screen print enlargers

Enlarging Copier

Student Support Services

- makes large-print single copies of syllabi, tests, brief readings, and handouts

Print Enlarging Terminal

Student Support Services

- for access to the General Library's on-line catalog

TTY (Teletype) or
TDD (Telecommunications Device for the Deaf)

Student Support Services

- enables an individual with deafness or a hearing-impairment to communicate by telephone if the other party being called also has a TTY/TDD

JAWS (Job Access with Speech)

Student Support Services

- for converting typing into verbal communication

Braille

Student Support Services

- Duxbury Translation Program - converts text to braille
- Romeo Braille Printer

Visual Tek

Student Support Services

- reading assist viewer
- enlarges printed or hand created documents for students with visual impairments

Agreement Form for Tape Recording Lectures

Under Section 504, Subpart E Postsecondary Education, of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans With Disabilities Act, institutions of higher education must provide reasonable accommodations to a student's known disability and may not deny equal access to the institution's programs, courses and activities. Tape recording lectures is a reasonable accommodation for students whose documentation calls for this accommodation.

Faculty have the right to require a student who uses a tape recorder to sign an agreement for tape recording and present the form to the instructor.

I,_____, agree that I will
(Student's Name)

not release the tape recordings, or transcription, or otherwise hinder

_____
(Professor/Instructor's Name)

ability to obtain a copyright on lectures that I have taped in

_____
(Department, Course Number, and Title)

_____ _____
Date **Student Signature**

This form is to be submitted to the instructor/professor upon completion.

Accessibility Checklist

This checklist is designed to be used in the planning stages for university-sponsored events by professional staff, student workers, and student volunteers.

Campus	Yes	No
• Wheelchair accessible location (elevators with lowered controls, wide hallways, lowered fountains and phones, ramps, automatic doors)	_____	_____
• Restrooms with wide stalls and grab bars	_____	_____
• Frequently used materials on lower shelves or staff available to assist	_____	_____
• Equipment used by students available in wheelchair accessible area	_____	_____
• Accessible parking nearby	_____	_____
• Accommodations available at planned events such as interpreters, rooms arranged for visibility of speaker, handouts in alternate format, and adequate space for wheelchairs	_____	_____
Media		
• Statement regarding availability of accommodations on all advertising	_____	_____
• Videos/films with captions	_____	_____
• Statement that alternate formats are available upon request	_____	_____
• TTY/TDD	_____	_____
Inclusive Policy		
• Appropriate attitudes of the program staff toward individuals with disabilities	_____	_____
• Appropriate language to refer to people with disabilities	_____	_____
• Appropriate attitudes of nondisabled students toward individuals with disabilities	_____	_____

Project PAACS
Department of Counselor Education and Educational Psychology
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Alternate formats of this guide are available upon request.

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